

**ESSEX COUNTY EXECUTIVE DIVINCENZO JOINS WITH LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS
AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS TO PROTEST WILLIAMS TRANSCO GATEWAY
EXPANSION PROJECT**

Group Asks NJDEP to Reconsider Permits as Expansion will Negatively Affect Wetlands, Increase Flooding and Pose Public Safety Risks

Roseland, NJ – Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. joined with Roseland Mayor James Spango, the Borough Council and representatives of Roseland Against the Compressor Station, New Jersey Sierra Club, Food and Water Watch and 350NJ to protest the Williams Transco Gateway Expansion Project in Roseland. The united front of elected officials and environmentalists is requesting the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to reconsider its decision to approve two wetlands permits on the grounds that the expansion project will have detrimental effects on the wetlands area.

“Essex County is a densely populated area and we should be doing everything we can to protect the environment, preserve open space and enhance the quality of life and protect the safety of our residents. The compressor station is already located in a vulnerable area and the expansion of the facility will impact our environment and potentially increase flooding,” DiVincenzo said. “We respectfully ask that the NJDEP reconsider its decision about granting the permits,” he added.

“We are genuinely concerned for the health and safety of our residents. The additional risks and environmental impacts that the expansion of this already underutilized compressor station brings outweigh the benefit to our community and our residents. We urge our residents to get informed, get involved, and continue to fight the expansion of this project. The Roseland Mayor and Council are here to support you and fight for your best interests,” Mayor James Spango and Roseland Council President Chris Bardi said in a joint statement.

“I support this effort to ask NJDEP to reconsider the permits. If you are successful, it will minimize the amount of danger to all our communities,” Sheriff Armando Fontoura said. Assemblywoman Mila Jasey and Freeholders Patricia Sebold, Romaine Graham and Len Luciano expressed their support of the appeal and the need to protect the environment and public safety.

“Williams/Transco’s proposal to more than double the horsepower of the Roseland compressor station should never have been approved, and that is why both the federal and state permits have been appealed by the town of Roseland, RACS and state environmental groups. This doubling of horsepower is wildly out of sync with the amount of new gas they say will be sent through it. It will increase safety risks for those living and working nearby and negatively affect air and water quality. For these and other reasons, we call upon Governor Murphy’s Department of Environmental Protection to reconsider and reject this ‘Gateway Expansion Project,’ ” said Ted Glick, Roseland Against the Compressor Station (RACS) and President of 350NJ.

“If Governor Murphy wants to accomplish his own climate and clean energy goals, he must take immediate action to halt dirty, dangerous and unnecessary fossil fuel expansion projects like the Roseland compressor station. There is no way to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions while approving new polluting projects that will increase those emissions. The governor can protect the health and safety of Roseland and all our New Jersey communities while establishing himself as a national leader on climate change by enacting an immediate moratorium on all fossil fuel expansion projects,” said Matthew Smith, Senior Organizer with Food & Water Watch and Food & Water Action.

“DEP sided with dirty power and dirty water in granting permits for the Roseland Compressor station. The DEP was wrong in granting these permits based on their own rules as well as violating the public trust. The

compressor station will lead to increased flooding and water pollution in an area with too much of both. We have called on DEP to rescind those permits and have appealed the permits. The Roseland compressor station is dangerous to the health, safety and environment of anyone living near it. The Roseland station sits in a flood plain of the Passaic River, one of the most flood-prone rivers in the country. Filling in wetlands will increase flooding. Industrial runoff including metals such as chromium, volatile organic chemicals and oil will be released into the river,” said Jeff Tittel, director of the New Jersey Sierra Club. “DEP said the station will cause temporary disturbance to the buffer, but there is no such thing. The project will cause permanent damage, cutting down trees and removing wetlands that act as natural storm barriers and water filters. Increased flooding will impact properties and drinking water intakes. An explosion or leak would threaten communities, destroy important habitat and add pollution to the waterways,” he added.

The first permit being appealed would allow Williams Transco to construct a new bridge and driveway and disturb about half an acre of land for use as temporary work space. The second permit being appealed would allow the pipeline company to temporarily use another half-acre parcel for construction and equipment storage, staging, parking and mobile office space.

The group is arguing that the disturbance of the wetlands, whether it is permanent or temporary, will result in the removal of trees, change the soil, hydrology and land use of the area, result in additional flooding and negatively impact the Passaic River ecosystem. In addition, the compressor station itself poses a public safety risk because of the toxic chemicals and greenhouse gases released from the facility.